



# ANA troops return from relief effort in Pakistan

Story by Air Force Staff Sgt. Victoria Meyer  
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**K**abul, Afghanistan—Twenty Afghan National Army soldiers returned Oct. 30 to a homecoming ceremony in Kabul after nearly three weeks of assisting with earthquake relief efforts in Pakistan.

Four MI-17 helicopter aircrews from the ANA Air Corps, along with their maintenance personnel and 32 ANA doctors and nurses, participated in the relief efforts.

The Afghan contributions included the ANA aircrews flying more than 270 sorties, airlifting 1,071 casualties and transporting more than 88 metric tons of supplies including food, water, blankets and medical supplies.

ANA doctors performed countless surgeries, aiding victims of the devastating earthquake, while Afghan medical personnel set up field clinics and mobile medical teams to ensure they could help as many people as possible.

The mobile teams worked out of Chenari, Pandoo and Galidopata at the same time. By the end of the mission, the teams had helped 3,770 injured people, said ANA Brig. Gen. Shamim, the medical team leader for the mission.

Five U.S. servicemembers from the Office of Security Cooperation—Afghanistan accompanied the crews



Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Victoria Meyer

**Dr. Ahmad Yusuf Nooristani (left), first deputy Minister of Defense, and Maj. Gen. Dawran (center), ANA Air Corps commander, honor the Afghan National Army soldiers, doctors and nurses who returned from assisting with earthquake relief efforts in Pakistan.**

to Pakistan.

“The ANA aircrews deployed quickly and were among the very first to arrive in Pakistan. They filled a critical gap in airlift capability until sustainment forces could arrive,” said Air Force Lt. Col. Steve Lipscomb, senior member of the U.S. team that accompanied the ANA. “Everyone who participated recognized the importance of this operation and was eager to help their neighbors during this tragic event.”

After coordinating with Pakistani authorities, the team moved to Sawen Koucha, where no medical care was available. There, they set

up a 50-bed medical clinic and treated nearly 400 people.

Several key leaders from the government of Afghanistan attended the homecoming ceremony.


Dr. Ahmad Yusuf Nooristani, first deputy Minister of Defense; Lt. Gen. Sher Mohammad Karimi, deputy chief of General Staff for Plans and Operations; Maj. Gen. Mohammad Zaher Azimi, assistant Minister of Defense for Parliamentary, Social Relations and Public Affairs; Maj. Gen. Dawran, Air Corps commander; Maj. Gen. Yaftali, surgeon general of the ANA, and other Defense Ministry leadership welcomed the soldiers

back from Pakistan and thanked them for their service.

Leaders from the Office of Security Cooperation–Afghanistan were also on hand to welcome home the team as Air Force Maj. Gen. John T. Brennan, OSC-A chief, Army Brig. Gen. James Hirai, director of OSC-A's Defense Reform Directorate, and others came to show their support.

They all had laudatory words for the team's work in Pakistan.

"It gives us great pride that the ANA and Afghan government were able to help the Pakistan earthquake victims," Nooristani said.

"Once more, you brave people proved that wherever and whoever needs help throughout the world, you are ready to help them and be successful," Nooristani said. 



Dr. Ahmad Yusuf Nooristani, first deputy Minister of Defense, thanks a member of the Afghan National Army who spent several weeks in Pakistan taking part in earthquake relief efforts.



Photos by Air Force Staff Sgt. Victoria Meyer

(Above) Dr. Ahmad Yusuf Nooristani expresses his gratitude to the members of the ANA who contributed to Pakistan's recovery in the aftermath of the earthquakes by helping more than 3,700 injured people throughout the country.

(Left) A young girl dressed in traditional Afghan attire presents a bouquet of flowers to an Afghan National Army soldier during the ceremony. ANA doctors, nurses and aircrew members deployed to Pakistan for several weeks to aid with earthquake relief efforts.